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Department of State **TELEGRAM**

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S E C R E T SAIGON 2434

LIMDIS

SUBJECT: FOREIGN OBSERVERS AT 1971 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

1. AS QUESTION OF FOREIGN OBSERVERS TO INSPECT THE 1971 VIETNAMESE ELECTIONS LIKELY ARISE SOON, WE THINK IT IS TIME TO FORMULATE POSITION WE SHOULD TAKE.

2. OUR RECOMMENDATION IS THAT WE LEAVE INITIATIVE TO GVN. AFTER THE 1967 ELECTION SOME VIETNAMESE REACTED ADVERSELY TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF FOREIGN OBSERVERS AT THE POLLS AND CONSIDERED THEIR PRESENCE BOTH AS A REFLECTION ON VIETNAMESE SOVEREIGNTY AND AS EVIDENCE OF GVN SUBSERVIENCE TO THE US.

3. IF GVN SHOULD FOR OWN REASONS DECIDE TO INVITE INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS AND SOLICIT OUR HELP, BELIEVE WE SHOULD COOPERATE IN EVERY APPROPRIATE WAY, ALWAYS, HOWEVER, LEAVING GVN OUT IN FRONT. THE ELECTIONS IN ANY EVENT WILL ATTRACT HEAVY PRESS COVERAGE.
BUNKER

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Dan Spalding DATE 1/26/82
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